1608/3342.

The Triumphs of

VIRTUE and BEAUTY,

OR, THE HISTORY OF THE

LIFE and ADVENTURES,

OF

Miſs HARRIOT de M**NV*LL*RS,

CONTAINING

THE extraordinary Meeting of Fidelio, a young Gentleman of Fortune and Honour, with Harriot de M**nv*ll*rs, whoſe Mother was offering her to Proſtitution.—The hiſtory of her Life and Misfortunes—Bankruptcy of her Father, by the villainy of a Partner, which occaſions his Death, and reduces both Mother and Daughter to Want and Miſery.—From which Fidelio reſcues the Daughter, and places her in affluent Circumſtances, (though not time enough to prevent the Death of her Mother)—Horrid villainy of Sir Harry B—m, who contrives to ſteal Harriot away and in attempting to ruin her, almoſt kills her twice; Her wonderful Eſcapes.—The wicked Scheme of a Mrs. Moreland, for debauching Harriot, which is prevented by her ſtabbing herſelf, on finding ſhe is decoyed to a Houſe of ill-Fame—Occurrences during her Cure; and happy meeting again with Fidelio, to whom ſhe is afterwards married, &c.

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VIRTUE and BEAUTY

TRIUMPHANT.

FIDELIO, a young gentlemanof virtue and fortune, who, returning home from a friendly viſit, in his way through Catherine-ſtreet, in the Strand, having occaſion to make a halt near the door-way of a noted tavern, within the ſhade of the lamps where, as it happened, he muſt involuntarily become an auditor to a dialogue juſt then begining, between an elderly woman in but mean apparel, and one of the drawers of that houſe, at the ſtreet door.

The poor woman, in the moſt ſubmiſſive manner, titling the drawer ſir, began with the obligation it would be to her, if he would be ſo good as to ſend to her daughter when ordered by any of his cuſtomers to ſupply them with a girl; then proceeded to aſſure him, that ſhe lived in thſe neighbourhood; and was dictating to him the houſe, and court: when the fellow, ſuperciliouſly ſlighting her tale, replied, that he had daily ſo many applications of that ſort, from one or other that he could not trouble his brain with her direction; and was turning from her: but the old woman ſtopt him, by delivering a paper into his hand. and at the ſame time inſiſting, that her daughter ſhould not fail, conſtantly to be generous to him, proportionably to her earnings.

The fellow ſcrached his head, ſeeming to be ſomewhat thoughtful; but ſoon recovering from his ſtudy; is ſhe fair, ſaid he, or black? O! fair as any little angel, ſaid ſhe. And light haired, demanded he. Ay, as the very flax itſelf, replied ſhe. Why, let me ſee, ſaid the drawer;------ Can ſhe dreſs tolerably upon a ſhort warning? Alas ſir, anſwered the mother, our cloaths are all in pawn, ſave what I have on my back, and her brown ſtuff nightgown; as for her linen, I can't commend its finery; though it is clean and ſweet, ſir; but as her gains come in, I purpoſe by little and little, to redeem her cloaths, when ſhe need not be aſhamed to appear before a nobleman; for ſhe will then have as good things to put on as moſt young woman who tread the ſtreets.

Hear

Hear me, woman, ſaid the drawer; I expect Sir Harry P——m here before twelve, with ſome company, who ſeldom fail ordering a girl, or more ;— ſend her down to me as ſoon as you can, let her aſk for Dick ;—I muſt have ſome converſation with her firſt myſelf.—My vails depend upon my cuſtomers.—I am their taſter, nor dare I to recommend to them, what ſuits not my own palate.—Send her down, I ſay, for if ſhe be the novice you repreſent, I muſt qualify her with aſſurance, e'er ſhe enters upon her calling with them, or they'll laugh at me.

The old woman, returning abundance of thanks to our generous ſpark for his friendly intimations, dropt him a low curteſy, and retreated with all poſſible diligence, to introduce her daughter to ſuch preferment, as ſhe promiſed herſelf ſhe had obtained for her.

Fidelio's curioſity had detained him longer than any natural demand would have required; but he was ſo ſhocked at the ſcene that had preſented, that he fell into a ſoliloquous exclamation againſt the woman firſt, and then againſt the drawer.

Good heaven! ſaid he, is it poſſible! that a mother! a mother! can be ſo far diveſted of parental tenderneſs, as to become procureſs to her own off-ſpring? Suffer her to become a proſtitute for hire? Deliver her to the arms of a raſcal, whoſe very viſage indicates the diſpoſition of his ſoul to be as black as hell itſelf? And by him to be conſigned to diſgrace, infamy, abuſe, diſeaſes, and guilty penury?

This

This ſaid, he puſhed forward with more celerity after the old woman, whom he had at firſt from meer fancy followed, only for a knowledge of the abode of ſo much iniquity; and ſhe had ſcarce knocked at the door, before he came up with her: then tapping her on the arm, he took her aſide, informed her of the diſcourſe he had overheard between her and the drawer; and demanded, whether he might not be introduced by her to the young woman ſhe had been juſt mentioning?

It cannot be ſuſpected, that many words had paſſed, before he had obtained his admiſſion to the intended victim; For the old lady, pleaſed with the proſpect of the approaching relief, which ſhe could not expect to be inconſiderable from a perſon of Fidelio's appearance; without further preface, or previous intimation to her daughter, deſiring him to walk in, uſhered him into the chamber to her.

Fidelio's heart beat high, and his paſſions were exceſſively moved to commiſeration, on ſight of the object then before him, with her head reclined to the table; ſupported by her folded arms; and yet incapable of raiſing itſelf to behold the ſuſpected author of her undoing; nor had ſhe the leaſt power to ſtir from her poſture: for which reaſon, the old lady drew near to comfort her.

My dear Harriot, ſaid ſhe, why ſo melancholy, my love? Riſe, my dear — I have in my walks, met with a gentleman who deſires your company; —be chearful, my love,—he ſeems a moſt worthy gentleman'—Come, my dear, it will be the better

better for us both ;—Ceaſe your diſcompoſure now relief preſents to us. Come, I know you will be a good girl, and obliging.— I will leave you together, my preſence may be uneaſy to you

Having thus ſaid, ſhe left Fidelio with her daughter, ſhutting the door after her.

Fidelio drew a chair, and ſat down by her, offering but now and then a ſlight requeſt, that ſhe would permit him to behold her face ; aſſuring her, that he judged her refuſal to be but indifferent treatment, of him whom her mother had introduced to her for more ſublime ſatisfactions.

All his oratory would not prevail for a diſcovery of herſelf ; but ſtill ſhe wept, ſobbed, and ſighed, to ſuch a degree, as pierced, Fidelio's breaſt with the tendereſt compaſſion for her ; nay, even till her repeated intreaties not to compel her to it, had wrought him up to the ſummit of curioſity, for not only a view of her face, but the cauſe of her uninterrupted lamentation.

Fidelio, no longer able to remain a ſpectator only of ſuch real diſtreſs, and anxious for a diſcloſure of her woe ; young woman, ſaid he, the exceſs of your affliction hath ſo affected me, that I muſt remain ſenſible of the utmoſt diſquiet, till I ſhall hear from your own lips, the true cauſe of it, If my preſence diſtreſſes you, command me hence ; but let me not depart unſatisfied of the occaſion of your ſorrow. Speak freely to me, added he ; unboſom yourſelf to me.—My nature will not ſuffer me to offer you an injury.— It

poſſibly

poſſibly may be in my power to mitigate your griefs; but aſſure yourſelf, they ſhall from me; recieve no addition. Riſe then, and anſwer me.

Hariot being touched with a ſolace at Fidelo's gentle treatment; replied, that conſcious ſhame forbad her to indulge his requeſt; nor did ſhe believe, that ſhe could ſurvive the expoſure of her face to him.

He then intreated her to reveal the cauſe of her ſo bitter wailings, and again proteſted, that he would attempt nothing either prejudicial to her honour, or chaſtity; when after many ſmothered ſighs, during a ſhort pauſe ſhe had made for recovering herſelf, ſhe began.

O ſir, ſaid ſhe, whoever you are, whether a father, a brother, a kinſman, or a lover to any young lady; think, O think, I ſay, if you are but a Chriſtian, that the expreſſions of my ſorrow which you now judge extravagant, are but a neceſſary preclude to my approaching miſery; for with what face can I ever behold mankind again, with what ſpirit can I ever more addreſs my Maker, (and here ſhe wept afreſh) after the voluntary privation of my virtue, my chaſtity, and my honour?

Alas! that fate ſhould ever have caſt me upon the bare neceſſity of a doubt on that head! but fortune hath, indeed, preſented her bitteriſt cup to me; and O! that its contagion was but ſo virulent, as to diſpatch me by its proſpect, e'er I could be able to ſwallow the potion; but even that is denied to wretched me. Your errend hither,

ſir,

ſir, will not ſuffer you to gueſs twice, for my meaning.

Madam, replied Fidelio, (who could ſcarce ſuſtain his own anguiſh for the young creature's concern) if the treaty commenced this evening by the old lady (your mother, as ſhe calls herſelf) for your diſgrace, was not proſecuted at your own option; you have here, in me, ſo far from the perſon of a deſtroyer, that you ſhall therein find a real friend; but gratify me one ſtep further, as to your name, family, and the occupation of your father.

Harriot, at that requeſt, fetching a ſigh from the bottom of her ſoul, relapſed again into ſuch an exceſs of weeping, as not only obſtructed her own ſpeech, but almoſt tortured Fidelio upon the rack, in pity to her; till that ſubſiding again, and recollecting herſelf;

My father, ſir, ſaid ſhe, by birth claimed rank next to a peer in France; his anceſtry from one of the oldeſt eſtabliſhments in that kingdom; he was deſcended from proteſtants of the remoteſt ſtanding, and in which principle he trained me up; which upon ſome ſlight diſguſt to the government, he was compelled to abandon, and fly that country, with my mother a Roman Catholick, and myſelf his only child, then in arms. He fixed for ſome little time in Holland, where ſuch of his effects were remitted to him, as by the vigilence of two faithfull friends, were privately collected together, under their own names.

In my fifth year, he left Holland, where he had gained a ſmattering of merchandize, in order to fix himſelf in London, for the improvement of the remains of his fortune in the mercantile way, for the benifit of his family; nor were his endeavours unſucceſsful, for the firſt ten years of his traffick; he by that time, accounting himſelf worth ten thouſand pounds,

Now it was, that growing antient and infirm, he purpoſed to have quitted his buſineſs, and to have retired into the country, for the ſake both of his own health, and that of my mother.

He had a book-keeper, who from many years ſervice under him, was become perfectly verſed in his method of buſineſs, and had been intruſted by him with all his concerns. This man, whoſe name was Mead, being acquainted with my father's deſign of retreating, which on courſe muſt have thrown him out of employ, perſuaded him not to deſert thoſe advantages which commerce had afforded him, and to permit him to carry it on for him, which he undertook to do, to equal advantage as before, by my father's ſtock only; admitting him into a quarter part of the trade, to give him the name and credit of a partner.

My father, imagining Mead to be a very honeſt and judicious young man, ſnapt at the propoſal; and though himſelf and family were retired to a ſmall diſtance in the country, yet he coming often to town for the firſt two years, and ſuperviſing the books, was fully ſatisfied of his being a ſufficient gainer; from which time we being

being ſettled further in the country, my father grew more remiſs in his over-ſight of the accounts, though he ſtill doubted not of the perpetual increaſe of his capital.

We kept our coach, three men ſervants, and two maids; and lived as genteely as any neighbour in many miles of us, both careſſed and eſteemed by the rich, and highly honoured by the poor, to whom my father was ever to his beſt ability liberal: But O, fatal cataſtrophy! while we were in this manner enoying ourſelves; my father in the fourth year of his retreat, was ſtriken with a dead palſy; which reminding him more peculiarly of his latter end, he applied to Mr. Mead for an adjuſtment of accompts, and a diſſolution of the partnerſhip, that he might leave my mother and me as free from incumbrances, as he poſſibly could at his death.

Mead, the more my father preſſed for a ſettlement, inſinuated the more cauſes of delay; 'till my father growing weary with fruitleſs applications, and not being able to take the jurney to London himſelf, ſent his lawyer, to inſiſt upon a ſight of the books, a ſtate of the accounts, a diſſolution of the partnerſhip, and payment of my father's balance.

Mead pretended that his books were not poſted home, which would prevent him from delivering a true ſtate of the account; but that in fourteen days, at fartheſt, both that and the balance ſhould be ready for him.

My father readily agreed to ſtay the appointed time, not doubting of bringing his affairs to an agreeable concluſion; but on the very tenth day

afterwards, a meſſenger entered our houſe, laid an embargo on every utenſil, and produced my father's name in the gazette, as a bankrupt.

Judge you, ſir, if it be poſſible, the confuſion of our minds. The ſhock of it ſo ſhattered my father's infirm frame, that he ſurvived it not quite three weeks—What could my mother and I do? Our ſervants deſerted us unpaid; and my father was obliged, for his interment, to the charity of ſome few of his neighbours, whoſe reſpect for his memory had urged them to a contribution for that purpoſe.

My mother and I, having no relations in England, found meer friendſhips exceſſive cold; even to that degree, that a ſtate of ſtarving was preferable, to the ſevere rebuffs we daily met with, as the almoſt ſure attendants on our petitions for the leaſt relief.

I exerted my whole patience, and bore up with the better grace under my own misfortune, meerly to prevent the deſponding ſpirits of my mother from ſinking, whoſe grief had well nigh made an end of her; for I thought that her death was the only thing wanting to a conſummation of my depair.

We arrived in town pennyleſs, as to coin; but miſtreſſes of no ſmall ſhare of the beſt of wearing apparel; for that the commiſſion took not from us. We fixed in this houſe, kept by one of our former ſervants, a widow woman, but no ways able to contribute to our ſupport.

We,

We, by her aid, from time to time, were obliged to ſuſtain nature by the ſale and pawn of our cloaths by piece-meal, one thing after another; till we are now reduced to the cloaths on our backs only; and what is ſtill worſe, if worſe than that can be, is, that we owe the poor woman twenty ſhillings for our lodging; which heaven knows, we have no other proſpect of diſcharging, but by the accurſed meens which brought you hither, ſir.

Harriot then renewing her weeping, the ſoftneſs of Fidelio's nature expreſſed itſelf by accompanying her, ſo heartily; that a ſtranger who ſhould have then beheld them both, would not by any external teſtimony have been able to judge wether of the two had the juſteſt grounds for their ſorrow.

Having paſſed ſome time in this ſtate, Fidelio firſt recovering himſelf, and wiping his eyes; dear Miſs Harriot, ſaid he (for ſhe had informed him that her name was Harriot de M—n—v—rs) I cannot but admit the juſtneſs of your perplexities: but yet, your diſtreſs is not paſt alleviation. This exceſs of deſpair but incapacitates me from propoſing, and yourſelf for accepting, the means of your future happeneſs. Let me intreat you to ſhake off theſe tokens of deſpondency; recal your natural calmneſs, and attend to the propoſitions I ſhall make for your accommodation.

Alas! dear ſir, replied Harriot; though undoubtedly, in my affliction, over-born with the melancholy proſpects that preſent to me in life; the very ſound, though but of diſtant relief, muſt

charm

charm my ear moſt muſically; yet, when I reflect, and caſt in my mind the ſacrifice that will be required on my part, as the invaluable condition to precede ſuch advantages; even nature ſhrinks at the proſpect, and virtue claims ſubmiſſion to the worſt of ills, to griping penury, nay death itſelf, preferable to the ever ſtinging hopes of advancement, from ſuch vile practices: but, ſir, it is not for myſelf alone I grieve, it is for my loſt innocence, and for the diſtraction my poor parent ſuffers, leſt now her all is gone, her ſhort remains of life ſhould be lingered out in a priſon. As for myſelf, ſervice would amply provide for me; but then my labours could never mantain her too. No, if we muſt ſink, let us fall togather.

You demanded, ſir, whether my concurrence was had to my mother's offer of my honour; I cannot ſay it was not: but how looked we! we kiſſed, we embraced, we wept; but no commodity of life attended it; nay, we faſted too, till nature almoſt failing, ſhe ventured, as our laſt ſtake, to make the tremendous propoſition to me. Was there the leaſt alternative? muſt I ſee her die who gave me birth?—When poſſibility had but placed, though the moſt ſhocking means, in my power for ſuccouring her? My trial was too ſevere to admit of a denial, and I complied.

If now, ſir, ſince you have heard my ſtory; honour, compaſſion, generoſity to the afflicted, can warm your breaſt with motives to our relief, (the deadly price unpaid) extend it to the obiect before you, truſting only to heaven for your reward.

Dear

Dear miſs, ſaid Fidelio, (who was ready to burſt with anguiſh) ceaſe further complaining, or I can no longer ſubmit to your company. I hoped you would have before believed me honourable. I call heaven and earth to witneſs, that your virtue is entirely ſafe for me, who neither have, or have had the leaſt thought, or inclination to violate it.

My motive for the preſent viſit was, to ſupport, not vitiate your inocence. I heard the cruel bargain driven for you, and judging that your iniquity was not yet begun; I reſolved, if poſſible, to put a ſtop to its commencement, I am fully convinced of the reluctance you firſt entertained ſuch horrid thoughts with; and that the motives for it might have prevailed over the beſt of us.

Dry then thoſe eyes, thus drenched in tears, no more to flow for dread of injured inocence. I need not urge you to perſeverance in your good reſolutions, when I ſhall have removed the weight that firſt ſunk you to a forced compliance to evil.

It now grows late, ſaid he, and I muſt leave you. Here, take this for your preſent ſupport, (putting his purſe with eleven guineas in it into her hand, as ſhe lay upon the table: for ſhe had not once liſted up her head yet) and if you pleaſe to permit me, I will drink tea with you to morrow in the afternoon, when poſſibly, ſomething farther may pe beneficially conſiderd of.

So much benignity, and from a ſtranger, and that unconditionally too, ſo excited Harriot's gratitude (for ſhe was now miſtreſs of a larger fortune than ever ſhe had grounds to expect for her own,

ſo

ſo long as ſhe lived) that caſting off all reſtraint, ſhe ſtarted up, and fell proſtrate at the feet of her benefactor ; when the heart being over-charged with matter, ſhe delivered it by ſuch a profuſion of thanks, bleſſings, and praiſes on Fidelio, as rendered the preſent, by far the moſt moving ſcene of the whole evening : For though neither partey abounded, but with inexpreſſible delight ; yet their tears had never been ſo violent as now : exceſs of joy; as exceſs of ſorrow, by no token being more ardently expreſſed, than by weeping.

Fidelio no ſooner beheld that glare of beauty which Hariot exhibited, on raiſing her head, than it amazed him ; and as the charms of that ſoft ſex never appear to more advantage than when in diſtreſs ; conceive, if it be poſſible, how raviſhed were the ſenſes of Fidelio, to find himſelf the happy inſtrument of comfort, to ſuch a deſerving object : however, as it began to grow into the night, Fidelio ſaluted, and left Harriot, under aſſurances of his return on the morrow.

The old lady, who had not doubted (by Fidelio's ſtay ſo long) but that her daughter had proved compliant to his wiſhes, now poſted to her chamber, without other conſideration, than of what price had been paid by the gallant, for his gratification ; when upon opening the door, and finding her daughter ſtill in tears, ſhe was ready to ſink ; leſt through her reſerve, ſhe ſhould have diſmiſſed him without the gain ſhe had promiſed herſelf from their meeting ; but Harriot ſoon undecieved her : for no ſooner had ſhe ſet eyes on

him

her mother than her arms were about her neck; then putting the purſe into her hand, ſhe ſunk upon the floor and fainted, without being able to utter the leaſt ſyllable.

Mrs M—nv—ll—rs was almoſt beſide herſelf, at ſight of her daughter in that condition. She called up Mrs. Morland, her landlady, to her aſſiſtance; but all that ſhe could adminiſter to poor Harriot, was little enough to revive her again.

Morland, who had ever been exceeding fond of Miſs Harriot, and was fully apprized of the deſign of the gentleman's viſit to her, judging by her diſorder, that the terror of what ſhe had done had overcome her, ſhe fell foul upon the mother, with moſt opprobrious language, for putting upon her daughter the commiſſion of an act, ſo abhorrent to her nature, as ſhe ſuſpected ſhe had at her mother's inſtance been engaged in: while the poor mother was ſo divided between grief for her child, and joy for the noble donation, that ſhe knew not to which to give the turn of the ſcale, and therefore ſtood motionleſs; till by degrees, Miſs recovering, her mother, touched with a ſenſe of her ſhame and ſufferings, at lenth gave paſſage to her grief, in lamentations for her undone daughter; and caſting from her the purſe; no, my dear daughter, ſaid ſhe, let me rather periſh irredeemably, than ever polute myſelf with the price of my dear child's diſgrace and ignominy. O! why ſuffered I my wants to prevail, for the encouragement of vice in the offſpring of my own bowels! but what is paſt, is too late to be recalled. I have

outlived the breach of my child's honour, but will not drag the gauling chain long after me; a ſhort ſpace more endured in my preſent miſery muſt end me; for nature almoſt ſpent, ſhall never be renewed, at the expence of my child's undoing.

Harriot, by this time being reinſtated, aſſured her mother and her landlady, that her innocence had not been defiled; which neither of them (having ſeen the purſe) in the leaſt crediting, ſhe again inſiſted that there was not the leaſt occaſion for her mother's tears, and then related to them every paſſage that had happened, between the gentleman and her; adding, that her mother might relinquiſh all her ſcruples, if ſhe would but believe her, that the gentleman ſuffered no leſs compunction at the relation of her ſtory, and the ſorrow ſhe expreſſed, than ſhe herſelf did at informing him of it; nay, ſo ſenſible was he of her misfortunes, ſhe ſaid, and ſo delighted at the capacity of relieving her, that he wept like a child, ſpeaking as tenderly to her, as an own father could have done; and, at the delivery of the purſe, which was before he had beheld her face, hoped, he ſaid, that there was ſufficent for her preſent occaſions, and promiſed her, that ſhe ſhould never more know what it was to want; nay, he had engaged to ſee her again the next day, when he would conſider with her, of ſomething more beneficial to her.

Mrs. M—nv—l—rs, revived by the aſſurances of her daughter's not having ſuſtained the injury

ſhe

ſhe had expected, grew joyous again; but there ſtill remaining a want of one moſt neceſſary acqueſt; for, as I ſaid before, this was the end of the ſecond day that both herſelf and daughter had remained faſting; they ſent therefore Mrs. Morland out to the cook's, for ſome refreſhment; which ſhe had almoſt returned without at laſt, it being by this time full midnight.

Mrs. M—nv--l-rs, during the time that Fidelio was with Harriot, had received a meſſage from Dick, to ſend her daughter to him immediately, which ſhe promiſed to do, not knowing how ſoon Fidelio might have left her; but he ſtaying ſo long, Dick had alſo been with her himſelf, wanting very much to ſee her; for that he had company waiting for her, who would undoubtedly break his bones, ſhould he diſappoint them; nor could ſhe ſcarce reſtrain him, from forcing his way up ſtairs to find her.

However, by aſſuring Dick that ſhe was juſt ſtept out, and that ſhe would bring her the moment ſhe came in; and by giving him the ſmoothcſt words ſhe could invent, ſhe at length got rid of him: for ſhe not knowing how her daughter might ſucceed with Fidelio, was unwilling to loſe the ſecond ſtring to her bow, by the leaſt diſreſpectful behaviour to Dick.

Mrs. Morland being returned with the ſide of a cold gooſe and apple ſauce, the only edible ſhe could procure; thay had but juſt all ſat down, with intent of ſatisfying the arrears of no leſs than ſix meals, which thay were indebted to their cra-

ing appetites, when a prodigious thundering at the door, as if it muſt have given way to the violence, put them into the utmoſt confuſion.

Mrs. Morland riſing, deſcended to the door, and opening it, in bolted four gentlemen exceedingly well dreſſed, under conduct of their foreman Dick. He demanded where the young woman was who lodged there? Which the woman of the houſe would have avoided anſwering to, by replying, that there was no ſuch perſon lodged there, and that they muſt certainly be miſtaken; but ſhe had ſcarce ſpoken the words, before they had puſhed by her, and mounting the ſtair-caſe, were entering Harriot's chamber.

Dick, who was their leader, began with a ſmart volley of curſes at the old lady, demanding why ſhe had not ſent her daughter according to promiſe? What? did ſhe imagine gentlemen would be abuſed at this rate, to wait her leiſure? Then ſeizing Miſs Harriot by the hand, had not their honours, he ſaid, been endued with more than chriſtian patience, they would before now have poured out thier fury upon her mother, for ſo groſs an abuſe.

Obſerving that ſhe made ſome reſiſtance; and was about to have ſcreamed out for help; he began to drag her towards the door, vowing, that if their honours would accquieſce under the indignity, he never would; for that having been offered to him, his ſhe ſhould be; and adviſed her to immediate compliance.

The

The gentlemen, whoſe eyes had never once removed from the charming Harriot, reſenting the injurious treatment Dick was beſtowing on her, commanded Dick to deſiſt; then one of them applying to Mrs. M—nv-l-rs, Good woman, ſaid he, did not you this very night offer that girl to Dick, and promiſe ſhe ſhould be forthcoming upon call? How happens it then, that now we are even come ourſelves for her, ſhe ſhould ſhew all this reluctance.

Sir, ſaid Mrs. M—nv-l-rs, heaven, and heaven only, has provided us that ſupply, the want of which firſt prompted me to the expoſure of my child; aud which gained, will, I truſt, prove her future preſervation.

How the old cat cants? ſaid one. She's a methodiſt, ſaid another. She's only rounding us for a better price, ſaid a third. Mother, ſaid the fourth, whom the reſt called Sir Harry; I love a pretty girl as my eyes, and you ſhall name your price, we'll have no more words with you.

Mrs. M—nv-l-rs, then begining to exclaim againſt their violence to her daughter, and threatening to call the watch, if they left not her lodgings immediately; Sir Harry gave Dick the word to march, and ſafely to conduct his priſoner with him: when ſuch a ſcene began, as would have ſhamed any thinking man, to have been a ſpectator of.

Dick handled his prey ſo roughly, that he threw her down, and cut a gaſh in her temples againſt the frame of a table. This guſhing out with blood,

ſoon

ſoon covered her lovely cheeks and neck with a crimſon dye; nor eſcaped her cloaths their proper ſhare in the diſtribution; but notwithſtanding the condition they had reduced the poor lady to, ſhe declining at their requeſt to riſe; Dick, and another at her two ſhoulders, and two others at her legs, raiſing her up, conveyed her in that manner down the ſtair-caſe; now one limb, and then another was quitted by its bearer, and ſuffered to daſh againſt the ſteps, till the poor innocent lady was bruiſed, almoſt from head to foot.

Her wound bled like a torrent, and ſhe had ſchreamed herſelf into an inſenſibility e're ſhe arrived at the door; her raviſhers, vowing all the while, that they would carry her in that diſmal plight to the F—t—n, and undoubtedly would not have falſified their words, had not the landlady, who at the begining of the ſcuffle had fled for aid, at the inſtant returned with a conſtable, and ſix watchmen, to the poor lady's aſſiſtance, juſt as they had brought her into the court.

The violent ſhrieks and outcries, which Harriot had iſſued from the beginning of the engagement, 'till her ſenſes had quite deſerted her, had drawn almoſt every face in the court to thier windows, to be ſpectators of the outrage; but now, the conſtable and his mirmidons demanding a peaceable ſurrender of the delinquents, they inſtantly dropt the poor young creature on the pavement; when not a moment had paſſed, before every ſword was drawn, and nothing leſs than a bloody

engagement

engagement could be expected to have enſued. The criminals, each with ſword in hand, with the moſt inveterate fury preſſed up to their aſſailants; but the watchmen's weapons proving the longer of the two, and they exerting themſelves vigorouſly in defence of their authority, ſoon knocked down two of the gentry, and diſabled Dick; when the remaining two, no ways anxious for a receipt of the ſame ſalutes, turned tail, and fled the pit, too nimbly by far for the enemy, and ſo eſcaped.

The two falen members, not now counting for one man, an elderly watchman was placed as a guard over them, thier ſwords ſecured, and every eye turned towards the poor diſtreſſed Harriot.

It was ſome time before thay had brought her ſufficently to herſelf, for walking up ſtairs again; but O horror! can I report the ſcene exibited on their arrival there! the very firſt thing that preſented to them, being Mrs. M—nv-ll-rs, wallowing in her blood, with her throat gaping to the very neck-bone. No words can paint the terror of the unhappy Harriot's diſtraction at this ſpectacle; ſhe tore her hair, beat her breaſt, and had certainly fallen by her deceaſed parent, had not one of the officers of the night, who had accompanied her up ſtairs, wrung the fatal inſtrument from her hand, which was yet reeking with her parent's blood; and which ſhe had in the height of her frenzey ſeized, with full intent to have diſpatched herſelf.

The

The houſe where they lived was but a very mean one, as may be imagined, when I inform my reader, that the firſt floor went but at one ſhilling the week; and that being ſo very ſmall that there was no way of diſpoſing the ſlaughtered corpſe of the mother, from the daughter's view; a neighbour, compaſſionating Miſs Harriot's misfortunes, after much intreaty, and not without ſome force, took her home with her, to releaſe her from the tragical proſpect.

The diſorder ſhe had been in, for her own ſufferings firſt, and then for the loſs of her mother, had diverted the lovely Harriot's thoughts from the hunger ſhe had before been oppreſſed with, (for the diſturbance happened before ſhe had ſwallowed the ſecond mouthful) ſo that half dead with ſurprize and anguiſh, the good woman who had received her under her protection, took her to her own bed, that ſhe might have an eye over her conduct, and thereby, if need was, obſtruct any deſperate attempt that her deſpair might urge her to.

The fatigue Miſs Harriot had undergone, both in body and ſpirit, for the whole preceding day; had together with her faintneſs for want of ſuſtenance, ſoon thrown her into a ſound ſleep; which though attended with various ſighings and diſtartions, ſhe awaked not from, till about nine o'clock next morning; her friendly neighbour having born her company all that time. The charitable woman then enquired of her health, how ſhe had reſted, and eucouraged her to riſe for

for breakfaſt; expecting to have had reaſonable anſwers to her demands; but the wind having poſſeſſed her ſtomach for want of food, had iſſued to her brain, in ſuch pernicious ſtreams, as had induced a plain delirium; for no ways hinting at replies to her worthy neighbour's queſtions, or even at the tranſactions of the preceding night, ſhe ran on with numberleſs inconſiſtencies and impertinencies, no ways coherent in themſelves, or relative to herſelf, her mother, or any prior tranſaction.

At length, however, ſhe was prevailed upon to riſe; and breakfaſt having waited for them for ſome time, it was not long before they entered upon that meal, which with it reſtored the charming Harriot to her priſtine ſenſes.

Soon after Harriot was ſent for by Squire Mittimus, and attended to that worthy magiſtrate together with her landlady, by ſeveral neighbours, to bear teſtimoney againſt the midnight diſturbers of the publick tranquility.

The appearance before his worſhip, produced Sir Harry, and Squire S——, as the two criminals already taken; when his worſhip being a particular croney of Sir Harry's would fain have paſſed by the affair as a frolick only, recommending it to them, if any little damage had been done, to recompence the poor people for it, pay their fees, and that then he would diſcharge them. But leaſt either party ſhould prove refractory, in order to have the conducting of the affair in his own hands, he demanded of Miſs Harriot,

and her landlady, what damage they might have received? The latter anſwered, ſhe attended only as a witneſs on behalf of Miſs Harriot; but miſs replied, that if a compenſation could be made for the death of a moſt indulgent mother, (ſetting aſide every private injury to herſelf) ſhe would refer the mulct to his worſhip.

The priſoners urged very ſtrongly in their defence, that ſhould any murder have been committed, they were wholly innocent of it; but that they judged it became his worſhip to examine very ſcrupulouſly into the reality of the fact itſelf, and trace out who did it.

He admitted that to be true, and proceeded to his examination; in ſhort, upon comparing all incidents, it appeared, that the old lady was left in the room alive when her daughter was carried off, and that neither of the riotters had returned, after they had once gotten down ſtairs; but that upon the watchmen's, the landlady's, and Miſs Harriot's return, they then found the old lady dead: nay, the landlady went ſo far, as verily to believe that ſhe had done it herſelf, though ſhe confeſſed, that ſhe imagined her to have been frightened into it.

His worſhip pauſed: Said he, the ſtatute is deficient in this caſe: Then ſurely, the magiſtrate, may judge this caſe to be bailable. Have you your bail ready, gentlemen? It is bailable; it muſt be bailable.

His worſhip having diſmiſſed the evidence, indulged the priſoners, till afternoon, to produce their bail, when he took it, and diſmiſſed them.

Miſs Harriot, though almoſt inconſolable for the loſs of her mother, could not however relinquiſh the hope of ſeeing Fidelio in the afternoon, according to his promiſe; for his treatment of her the preceding day had proved ſo tender and humane, that ſhe was under no further apprehenſion of miſchief from him.

In the afternoon he came, and was conducted into a little parlour to her, where having ſaluted her, he told her he had made bold to perform his promiſe of drinking tea with her; but not obſerving in her apartment yeſterday, the furniture of the tea-table, he had brought a new ſet of cups and a tea-pot with a pound of tea of each ſort which he begged her acceptance of; and that if ſhe would give him leave, he would ſend the maid of the houſe for a ſugar loaf.

Miſs Harriot, was not deficient in her compliments on the occaſion; which, and the appearance ſhe now made, in a different apparel, and eſpecially his own conſciouſneſs that her freedom proceeded from himſelf, inſpired Fidelio's ſoul with the moſt inexpreſſible ſatisfaction.

The tea things being ſet, Fidelio enquired after the health of her mother; when the dear girl, who 'till then had laid every conſtraint upon her nature, to avoid giving Fidelio pain, could no longer with-hold herſelf from tears, to an exceſs, proportionable to her former retention of them.

Fidelio was amazingly ſurprized at the event; and hoped, he ſaid, that no accident had happened, Miſs Harriot replied, Alas! She is no more!

more; but her tears preventing her immediate proceeding; Fidelio paused a while, 'till they abating, he demanded what sudden accident could have swept her off, who was, seemingly, in so good health the preceding night?

Miss replied, that the story was too long, and dreadful, for her to repeat then; but hoped, by the time tea was over, she should be better qualified for satisfying his curiosity.

They then fell to tea, which afforded Miss Harriot much pleasure, and it being ended, she satisfied Fidelio with the whole Transaction. After which, Fidelio told her that as the house she was in was but borrowed, and as her own lodgings were by no means worthy of her, he begged to be permitted to accommodate her with others, more deserving the rank he was ambitious of placing her in. That as for the funeral of her mother, he would give order for its decent performance, wherever she should command. And that she might not in the interim want for such conveniencies as she should esteem necessary, he presented her with a bank bill of fifty pounds.

Miss Harriot had born up pretty well under the inundation of blessings which broke in upon her, 'till she beheld the bank note; but then, no longer capable of conceiving that all this could proceed from friendship or charity only, without a view of loading her with such immensity of obligation, as must subject her to a compliance with his ever future request; she with tears in her eyes, fell on her knees before him.

O,

O, ſir, ſaid ſhe, whence flows all this unbounded liberality, and that to a poor forſaken ſtranger? If, as you profeſs, it is aimed only at my felicity, may that heaven and its ruler which intereſts himſelf in the regulation of mortal concerns, reward you an hundred fold, but if, ſir, O pardon my fears! and hear me patiently! you can conceal an heart deſirous of my overthrow, by the means you have already extricated me from it; if ſo much gentleneſs, ſuch unwonted compaſſion can ſubſiſt but in profeſſion, for your own latent purpoſes; O! leave the wretched Harriot to ſuſtain her fate in innocence, till providence in due time, ſhall otherwiſe manifeſt itſelf in my favour: Which, if it ſhall not do, I can ſtill fall, contented.

Fidelio was not only charmed with Harriot's moving ſpeech, which he was certain, from its energy, muſt have flowed from the dictates of her very ſoul; but ſo overcome by her tears, that raiſing her; my deareſt child, ſaid he, thy goodneſs, if any thing would compel me to a contradiction of my reaſon, and principles; but aſſure yourſelf, my admiration of your virtue hath given you ſuch rank in my eſteem, that as my life, my ſoul, nay, what is dearer to me, your own, it ſhall for ever be my concern to preſerve it unviolated.

She, weeping, acknowledged his goodneſs to her, and conſented, that himſelf ſhould procure her a lodging, where he ſaw fit; ſo that after ſettling a few other preliminaries, Fidelio again left her.

Miſs

Miſs Harriot had not been many days at her new lodgings, before ſhe was diſcovered by Sir Harry; who had wrought ſo far upon the poor indigent Mrs. Morland, by a round ſum of money in hand, and future promiſes, as to inform him of her ſituation; this, he being ſurprized at, and wondering how ſhe could ſo ſuddenly be advanced from a poor girl, offering herſelf to proſtitution for bread, to the condition of a lady offigure; by degrees, extracted from his informer the meaning of it; but his amazement ceaſed, upon the report of her being kept by a gentleman of the Temple.

His firſt policy was, by means of Mrs. Morland, over-ſway'd by his benefactions; for ſhe now waſhing for Harriot's family, had frequent acceſs to the lodgings. This wicked woman, dared even to mention Sir Harry to her miſtreſs; as the compleateſt gentleman ſhe had met with; having once ſince, ſhe ſaid, had the pleaſure of ſeeing him, upon an opportunity that he took of calling, and expreſſing his ſorrow for the diſturbance he had given her; and ſaid, when herſelf had pardoned him; that unleſs he could find out the young lady, and procure remiſſion of his offence, he ſhould for ever be the moſt unhappy of all men living.

She then continued to laviſh forth her encomiums upon Sir Harry, to ſuch adegree, as what ſhe had heard univerſally aſcribed to his character.

Mrs. Morland having thus qualified Miſs Harriot's rage, many days had not paſſed before Sir Harry was ſeen walking by her window ſeveral times,

times backwards and forwards; and that not for a ſingle ſpirt, but for a continuance of near a fortnight; inſomuch that Harriot even pitied him, and had reſolved if he ever more enquired for her, he ſhould be admitted; for he had twice or thrice been repulſed by Sam.

One morning, as Harriot was ſtanding at her parlour window, with the ſa'h up, came Sir Harry by; but ſhe had ſeen nothing of him 'till he was full fronting her; when ſuddenly halting, he made her a low bow, which ſhe returned with a curteſie.

Madam, ſaid he, had an angel declared to me, that under your beauteous form, ſo unforgiving an heart had harboured, it would have been impoſſible for me to have credited it. I crave but pardon upon my moſt abject ſubmiſſion, and even that's denied me: yet, though rejected from your preſence, and treated but as a beggar at your gate, I ſtill, e'er peace and I can ſhake hands together, muſt once more humbly implore it of you.

Sir, replied Harriot, if that is all your buſineſs to me, I am no ways averſe to it; but you have choſen a moſt improper place for eclairciſſments on that ſubject. Permit me then, dear madam, ſaid he, to a nearer approach; where having ſealed my quietas, I ſhall not only reſt content myſelf, but never more trouble you with a ſight ſo hateful, as I am to you.

He then ſtepping to the door, Miſs herſelf let him in; where his profeſſions of repentance were

diſcharged

at her feet, even to profuſion, vowing he would never more riſe from thence, 'till ſhe had paſſed by his crime, and reſtored his diſtracted mind to its wonted tranquillity.

Moved at ſo diſtreſsful a ſcene, Miſs Harriot, in her innocent ſimplicity almoſt wept over him, and at his petition forgave him; nay, at his importunate requeſt, to demonſtrate her charity towards him, permitted him to ſalute her, and without further intruſion he left her.

Mrs. Morland was by this time ſo wrought into his entereſt, that even her invention was to be ſtretched in the ſervice; for men are but fools in the practice of ſtratagem, to what women are; eſpecially where love, or luſt, is the point to be compaſſed.

Sir Harry, almoſt grown raving for the unlikelihood of ſucceſs in ſo nice a point, while curſing his cruel fate, that would preſent to his imagination no proable means to attain her by, was interrupted by Mrs. Morland, with hopes, from a ſcheme ſhe had in her head, ſhe ſaid, of putting Miſs Harriot abſolutely into his power.

Sir Harry claſped her to his breaſt, called her his good genius, his guardian angel; and big with the proſpect, clapped ten guineas into her hand for the diſcovery, which we may be ſure was no bar to the exertion of her utmoſt abilities in his ſevice.

Sir, ſaid Mrs. Morland, I have ſeen a ſervant of your's, not unlike Miſs Harriot's man Sam: procure him but ſuch a livery as her's and next Thurſday, I will be reſponſible for your poſſeſſion

of

of her. The baronet begged the means; when ſhe replied, that miſs was to be at the play on that evening: Let therefore your ſervant, ſaid ſhe, in her livery, anſwer to her call; myſelf will ſecure her's from interpoſing. Let him conduct her to your chariot inſtead of her own, (which Fidelio has given her) for at night it will not be diſtinguiſhable from it, and when you have ſecured her there, I need not give directions for future proceedings.

Sir Harry was in ſuch raptures at the promiſing proſpect, that he even doubled Mrs. Morland's reward; made extravagant promiſes, and ſubmitted to her direction.

What ſnares may not be laid for unguarded innocence! They may; but when moſt off our guard, then intervenes an inviſible defence, unſought, unexpected; but ever preſent, to the deſerving, at the moſt critical juncture.

All things were now adjuſted for execution of the fatal enterprize; and Mrs. Morland had privately engaged Sam, who loved a mug of beer at his ſoul, whilſt his lady would be ſafe at the play, to make one at a ſmall collation ſhe had provided, for ſome of her particular acquaintance.

Sam ſnapt at the propoſal, and no ſooner had he fixed his lady there, then he repaired to Mrs. Morland's, for a few hours indulgence over his favourite liquor; not doubting to be in readineſs at the box door to receive his lady, at the concluſion of the entertainment: But nothing leſs was intended by his companions, than that Sam

ſhould not ſee the theatre that night; at leaſt, till it was too late to meet with her there.

Sam thought himſelf exceeding happy, in the ſociety of ſo many good fellows, who each exerted his talents, for gaining the affection of the deluded Sam; nothing paſt from him without commendation; all debates were referred to his deciſion, and ſuch deference was paid to his openion by the whole fraternity, that Sam, in proportion to their praiſes, had ariſen in his own opinion to a double man. The beer flew round in plenty; a ſong was propoſed, and began by one of them, and that, ſeconded by another; but the encomiums paſſed upon Sam's pipe, had placed him in competition with a Faranelli.

Supper was ended early, that Samuel might not be ſtraitned in time; but then the hot-pot, by way of healer, being full half and half; ſo preſently intoxicated poor Sam, (for the reſt being apprized of its force, made their draughts of it more ſparingly) that the third round, fixed him to his chair for ſome hours.

Thus Sam being ſo happily diſpoſed of, Sir Harry's ſervant took his poſt, and without the leaſt ſuſpicion, uſhered poor Harriot into Sir Harry's chariot, which inſtantly drove off with her to L———ff bagnio; ſhe never once taking notice which way they were going, 'till the chariot ſtopping, and herſelf alighting, ſhe had not time to recollect her ſurprize, at being landed at a wrong door, before three fellows, one under each arm, and the third behind, had hurried her up

up into a two pair of ſtairs chamber backward, where they left her, to her own conjectures upon the incident.

Poor Harriot was too much amazed at the inſtant, for recovering proper reſolution how to behave. She had thoughts of running down ſtairs again; but did not doubt, but thoſe who had brought her thither, would ſecure that paſs beyond all poſſibility of return. She made to the windows, but they were ſtrongly barricaded; nor, though ſhe at length opened one of them, had ſhe any other proſpect, than a dead wall within a few feet of it: however, ſhe determined to make what noiſe ſhe could from thence, in hopes, that by the outcry of murder and fire, ſhe ſhould raiſe the neighbourhood to her relief: but ſcarce had ſhe formed her deſign, before the chamber door opening, who ſhould enter upon her but Sir Harry.

He ran to her, with all the fire of the moſt paſſionate lover, graſped her in his arms, and would have forced her round to the bed; but ſhe ſinking on the ground, was not ſo eaſily manageable, as while in a ſtanding poſture; for after ſeveral attempts, her ſtruggling preventing his elevating of her thither; having wrought himſelf into a thorough heat, he ſat down to expoſtulate with her, upon her barbarity to him, as he called it.

Miſs Harriot ſaid he, why this ſhyneſs? Why this reſiſtance againſt me, who am almoſt driven to deſpair for you, when at the ſame time you can ſuffer another to riot on thoſe charms, which

were originally engaged to me? Miſs, ſaid he, I love you, will marry you to morrow, by heavens I will; then ſuffer me not to exerciſe violence for that to night, which, I will never part with you, 'till I have attained.

Miſs Harriot uſed every means for prevaling with him to deſiſt from his purpoſe, expreſſing herſelf in the moſt moving and afflictive manner imaginable; but that no ways working upon his unbridled fury; he ſtill perſiſting on her reduction, and beginning to proceed again forcibly; ſhe, grown deſperate, turned her melting ſpeeches into upbraidings, vowing that before he ſhould obtain his ends of her, he ſhould cut her piece meal upon the ſpot: for that ſhe would ſubmit to the utmoſt ſeverities while life endured, rather than comply with him. This ſhe urged with ſuch reſolution and intrepidity, that concious of miſſing his point by gentler means, he ſeized her by violence, and in a mad rage hauled her about ſo unmercifully, that the lovely lady's piercing cries brought her an aſſiſtance, but little to have been expected.

In the next room to that, where Harriot and Sir Harry was thus in conteſt, were a venerable father of the city, with a merchant's lady of his moſt familiar acquaintance, ſoberly regaling over a ſupper of ſuch things only as could befit ſo elegant taſtes. They had over-heard all that had paſſed between Sir Harry and Harriot unmoved, till it proceeding to downright force, and the involuntary debauch of ſome young creature, as

they

they could eaſily diſcover ſhe was, by her voice; when themſelves being both parents of children, and applying the caſe to their own families, could no longer patiently remain privy to ſuch a tranſaction, which it ſeemed in their power to prevent. So that the citizen deſcending to ſome gentlemen in a lower room, who ſeemed of too ſerious a caſt to tolerate ſuch enormities: he expreſſed himſelf in ſuch black terms, and with ſuch energy, repreſented the neceſſity of expedition, in caſe they judged proper to redreſs the young lady, that one and all ſtarting up, they marched on ſword in hand, under the guidance of their informer, to the lady's relief.

The door, by happy turn of fortune, had not been ſecured within-ſide; ſo that they eaſily entered: but what a ſhock to humanity were they preſented with, on view of the adorable Harriot, reduced, and breathleſs with fatigue and ſtruggling, to almoſt a lifeleſs corpſe; with that vile inſtrument of her intended diſhonour, remorſeleſly attempting his flagitious villainy, as yet unperfected.

It was with the utmoſt difficulty that they could reſtrain their hands from the murder of ſuch a deteſtable wretch; but they ſecured him, in a ſeperate room, 'till they had ſent for the miſtreſs of the houſe and a maid-ſervant or two, to make proper applications, for reſtoring miſs to the functions of life again.

The good woman reporting that her condition was beyond their ſkill to intermeddle in, further than

than juſt to lay her as decently, and compoſedly as they could; a ſurgeon was ſent for, who immediatly let her blood, and by his own peculiar methods, after about half an hour's attendance upon her, pronounced her out of danger; but that great care muſt be taken of her, leſt ſhe ſhould catch cold; for that every muſcle being exceedingly ſtrained, and the blood in many parts of her body extravaſated, a cold might occaſion an inflamatory fever, which, ſhould it happen, might prove of the moſt fatal conſequence; but above all things, he adviſed them not to remove her that night.

When Harriot was returned to her ſenſes and the ſurgeon gone; ſhe expreſſed her acknowledgments to the humane ſtranger by whom ſhe had been preſerved, intreating him not to leave her 'till further aid arrived, and that he would ſend for Mrs. Morland to her, that ſhe might if poſſible, be conveyed home in a chair.

A meſſenger was diſpatched for Mrs. Morland, when beholding Harriot, ſhe cried like a child; vowing vengence to the villain that had killed her young lady: Miſs Harriot about one o'clock in the morning, under conduct of the ſtranger, and two more, was conveyed in a chair to her lodgings, Mrs Morland attending her.

The confuſion of the family, may be more eaſily gueſſed at than deſcribed; Harriot was put into a warm bed, where ſhe had a good night's reſt, but offering to riſe, ſhe could ſcarſe ſtir a limb, ſhe was in ſuch pain and miſery.

Fidelio

Fidelio, who frequently breakfaſted with Miſs Harriot, was thunderſtruck when he was told ſhe was in bed, and very ill. It was evening before ſhe was able to riſe, and ſee Fidelio, as he had never been admitted into her bed-chamber; and it was with difficulty ſhe could reach the parlour to meet him, he tenderly enquired after her health, but when ſhe had aſſured him, that but few hours paſt, ſhe had relinquiſhed every hope of ſeeing him again; no man could be more wretched than Fidelio, 'till ſhe had acquainted him with the tranſaction, but it was with much difficulty Harriot could prevail with him to relinquiſh the thoughts of revenge.

The gentlemen who had reſented Sir Harry's behavior to Miſs Harriot, purpoſod to have carried him before a magiſtrate in the morning; but dropping aſleep, one after an other, Sir Harry by connivance of one of the drawers, ſlipt off undiſcovered; and took his ſtand in a night-houſe 'till morning, and from thence to Mrs. Morland's, as the leaſt ſuſpicious place he could lie concealed in. He extolled her contrivance, every thing falling out ſo clever, 'till his unlucky ſtars cut him ſhort of his hope on the very criſis of its accompliſhment.

He could not deviſe what courſe was next to be taken; for that his every future comfort in life would be imbittered, 'till he had by ſome means or other ſubdued the cruel fair one.

Mrs. Morland pertended great backwardneſs, in further engaging in the affair, Sir Harry had been

been generuos to her already, and now offered her double the ſum if ſhe would employ her ingenuity to his ſervice, ſhe told him ſhe believed ſuch a ſcheme had darted in her head as would admit of no diſappointment.

The baronet, half mad for the propoſal, calling her his good angel, promiſed to give it her under his hand, to pay her a hundred guineas the moment it was completed; ſhe ſeemed compliant, but obſerving, by his impatience, that ſhe might mend her market; pretended her concience would not let her mention it, and begged him to urge it no further; What the devil would the woman have? Said he; tell me what will content you, and I'll gratify you, if poſſible.

You are too good Sir Harry, replied ſhe, but you muſt excuſe one's ſcruples. Why? dear Sir Harry, make but the note for two hundred pounds, and I will ſtand the brunt of my young lady's diſpleaſure: Sighing very grievouſly.

It ſhall be done, ſaid Sir Harry; and glad he was when he had finiſhed it, then having pocketed the note, ſhe let him into the ſecret.

Mrs. Morland told him that there was a young lady in the country whom Harriot was very fond of, that ſhe would pertend that ſhe had met this young lady and that ſhe deſired Harriot would come to ſee her at her aunt's; that there was a lady of her acquaintance, who would paſs for the young lady's aunt, and would contribute all in her power to ſerve him well? what do you purpoſe from that? ſaid Sir Harry, why? the young

young lady will not be at home, and the old lady who is to paſs for her aunt deſires her to walk up into the dining room that ſhe expects her niece in two or three minutes: then ſhe takes her into a back-room, where ſhe may bawl her heart out, before any ſoul hears her, but the family; the maid tells the coach-man, that his lady intends taking a walk in the park and deſires him to be at Spring-Gardens by eight o'clock; the old lady writes a billet to you, that the doe is toiled. You attend her, try by fair means to prevail, which failing, your coach waits you about two o'clock in the morning, in you pop her, and away with her to your country ſeat. Sir Harry, pleaſed with the plan, ordered her to put it in execution.

It was a fortnight before Miſs Harriot was able to ſtir abroad; during which time, Fidelio ſeldom failed ſeeing her twice a day, ſhe having been two or thee times abroad for the air, and now beginning to viſit again; Mrs. Morland took the opportunity of practiſing her ſcheme upon her: for engaging the poor deluded Harriot into the trap ſhe had laid for her. We ſhall now find her ſecured under the remorſeleſs hands of mother N—d—m, ſo celebrated for the deſtruction of the moſt innocent of her own ſex, Miſs Harriot being delivered into her gripe ſo imperceptibly; while the baronet was preparing to anſwer her ſummons, that fiend of hell was labouring, to vitiate each ſuggeſtion of Miſs Harriot's to modeſty, or perſeverance in her chaſtity.

She found herſelf inextricapably hampered, for that the old woman made no ſcruple to aſſure her of; adding, that never yet, had even the cunningeſt of them eſcaped, when once they had fallen into her hands. After a long lecture on the folly of virtue, and deſiring her to receive Sir Harry as ſhe ought, ſhe left her in the dark, taking the candle with her; and at her departure, ſhe double locked the door after her.

The poor lady's affliction ſat ſo heavy upon her, in this horrid dwelling, rendered ſtill more ſo, by the tremendous darkneſs, that ſhe ſought her deſtruction in deſpair; neither would that end her: However, before Sir Harry arrived, ſhe had recovered ſo much recollection, as to form a ſcheme for eſcaping from his brutality, It was a deſperate one, it muſt be confeſſed; but to what a length will not the dread of loſt chaſtity carry the virtous mind? It was not long before her keeper, uſhered in Sir Harry, under the name of a perſon, to whom miſs was under the ſtricteſt obligations, for the exceſs of his paſſion for her.

Miſs Harriot, having fixed her purpoſe before Sir Harry came, ſeemed not ſo ſhy of diſcourſing both with him and the old woman, as they expected; for mother N—d---n ſuſpecting from Morland's report, that miſs would have proved moſt refractory, had prepared ropes, pullies, and other engines in her way, to have been introduced upon the leaſt call, for her ſubduction; but miſs with a ſmile at Sir Harry, acknowledged that had he

he not made his application to a perſon of the old lady's ſkill whoſe arguments, ſhe confeſſed, had found no little weight with her, ſhe believed he would never have found her, in the pleaſant humour ſhe could not now refrain from.

Some compliments having now paſſed between mother N—d—m and Sir Harry, ſhe offered to retire, and leave them to themſelves: when miſs deſired her company ſomewhat longer, and that ſhe hoped ſhe ſhould have ſomething to eat; for having made but an indifferant dinner, ſhe was almoſt ſick with emtineſs. This free behaviour of his deareſt Harriot, inſpired the baronet with ſuch raptures, that a moſt ſumptuous ſupper was prepared, and the old cat invited, to partake with them; and now miſs's project unravelled itſelf: for while they were regaling themſelves in bumpers of the moſt coſtly wines; miſs taking the opportunity, while her company's hands were all employed, Sir Harry's in guiding up a bumper to her health, and his mother's in filling another to pledge him, of ſtriking a caſe-knife, with all her force into her breaſt; aiming it, intentionally, againſt her heart. Miſs dropt from her chair, the knife yet ſticking in the wound.

This gaſtly ſpectacle, congealed to ice her curſed aſſociates, Mother N—d—m ſhocked to extremity, cried out for help. Sir Harry raiſed the corps, but would not ſtir her from the ſpot, 'till further aid arrived; every hand was employed in miniſtering the ſpedieſt ſuccour to the wounded lady: for by this time ſhe appeared not to

be quite dead. They laid her upon the bed, the knife ſtill in her to a conſiderable depth; nor had one of them the heart to extract it, 'till a ſurgeon being fetched, he performed the operation. Such an inundation of blood then flowed from the wound, that the ſurgeon expected ſhe would have bled to death, before he could have ſtanched it. At length, he prevented further effuſion; and applied a dreſſing. he ordered her to be kept quiet, and left her: but though he had declared the wound not to be mortal, yet the loſs of ſo much blood had left her ſpeechleſs, and almoſt wholly inſenſible.

Sir Harry, all agony, and rage for his diſappointment; ſwore that he would yet preſerve her life, at the expence of his whole eſtate; nor ſhould he care a ruſh. though the whole female ſpecies were extinct, ſo that Harriot but ſurvived them: He blamed himſelf, for imagining ſhe acted a real part in her complaiſance to him and curſed his deluded ſenſes, for granting her an opportunity of deſtroying herſelf: he applied to mother N—d—m for a bed, telling her he would lie there, that he might watch every turn of her diſorder, he ordered proper perſons to ſit up with her all night, and that nothing neceſſary might be omitted.

Next morning the ſurgeon examined her wound, but it was the fifth day before ſhe ſhewed any tokens of recovery, when the ſurgeon gave great hopes of amendment. Sir Harry had never once left the houſe, or intended it 'till ſhe was well;

well; at length ſhe recovered her ſtrength apace, and the ſurgeon pronounced her capable of going abroad; but Sir Harry refuſed ro venture her ſo to do, 'till ſhe was better, Harriot was very impatient to go home, as he had promiſed her ſhe ſhould be ſafe conducted there, and that he would never more offer to her the leaſt moleſtation.

The time was now come for Harriot's removal, in the evening a coach was brought to the door ſhe would fain have gone by herſelf, yet he inſiſted on ſeing her home; and away went the coach at a great rate.

Harriot ſoon found ſhe had quitted the ſtones, and expreſſing her ſurprize, Sir Harry plainly told her ſhe was conducting to his country ſeat, where if ſhe behaved as became her, he ſhould ſtill regard her, if not, when he had done with her, he ſhould turn her a drift: poor Harriot could only expreſs herſelf by her tears, which flowed in vaſt abundance; they travelled all night, and next day arrived at Sir Harry's ſeat, he put her into the hands of his houſe-keeper, with a charge to let her want for nothing, but to keep a ſtrict guard over her. Harriot's wound was far from being healed, for which reaſon Sir Harry, having her now ſure, was leſs troubleſome to her: after about a fortnight ſpent either in her chamber or in the garden, where ſhe was always guarded; her jayler being taken ill, her poſt was then conferred upon Betty Finch, another of Sir Harry's maids. Miſs Harriot judged this a happy exchange, ſhe ſoon prevailed with Betty to contrive her

her eſcape, and to accompany her in her flight: Sir Harry being a hunting, they took that opportunity, and came to town in the ſtage-coach.

During this time, Fidelio had made all poſſible enquiry for miſs Harriot, but to no purpoſe he knew not what to think, in ſhort he was almoſt diſtracted, he had fixed his reſolution for travelling and was giving proper inſtructions to Harvey when Harriot arrived. Fidelio, overjoy'd to ſee her, fixing his arms round her. And am I realy ſo bleſt, as to behold thee once more, Harriot? ſaid he. You are, ſaid ſhe, ſo bleſt as that can make you, ſir; but what muſt I be? O Fidelio! you little know the conflicts I have paſt ſince I left you, but enough of that, providence hath born me through all; nor have I now a fear remains, ſince you are ſafe.

Fidelio was impatient to know what had befell Harriot, but ſhe beg'd her relation of it might be poſtponed till the next morning, when if he would honour her with his company at breakfaſt, ſhe ſhould then have ſuch a ſcene to lay before him, as would not only ſhock, but amaze him.

Fidelio having tarried for a ſhort repaſt with her, took his leave; but he was ſo diſtreſſed with the dread of what would ſalute his ears the next morning, that he could not once cloſe his eyes to ſleep the whole night; he attended the young lady to breakfaſt, and when that was ended, he informed Harriot what affliction he had ſuſtained for her abſence; miſs expreſſed her ſorrow for the uneaſineſs ſhe had given him; and began her

ſtory

ſtory with telling him, that Mrs. Morland, whom ſhe had eſteemed, as a woman who would have riſqued her life in her ſervice, was certainly in Sir Harry's intereſt, and had in this laſt inſtance, been the chief inſtrument in her diſtreſs: ſhe then proceeded with an account of every thing that had happened, not omitting the leaſt circumſtance: when Harriot having finiſhed her diſcourſe, my dear, miſs, ſaid Fidelio, how would your ſufferings have affected me, the bare relation of which, hath ſounded ſo terrible in my ears, was it not for the deference I pay to the hand that hath been inſtrumental in it? but have you yet conſidered of a recompence for the honeſt labours of your deliverer? Miſs anſwered, that with his leave, ſhe thought to retain her in her ſervice; Fidelio deſired he might ſee her, and Betty being called up, he acknowledged her humanity in preventing an innocent from becoming a proſtitute; at the ſame time taking out his pocket book, here, Betty, ſaid he, (giving her a Bank note for an hundred pounds,) I give you this as a reward for your goodneſs. Mrs. Morland, was then ſent for, who confeſſed the whole contrivence; likewiſe that the ſeducing her to the bagnio was with her privay, when ſhe had compleated the whole ſcene, ſhe was ordered to leave the houſe, and never to ſet foot within the doors again.

Harriot and Fidelio were again happy in each other's company, 'till he became ſo enamoured of her, that he determined no longer to defer the offer of marriage to her.

Fidelio

Fidelio, though he was firmly perſwaded, in his own opinion, that Miſs Harriot was truly virtuous, yet, whilſt there remained a bare poſſibility, of her being otherwiſe; or at leaſt, that ſhe might retain the ſeeds of vice in her compoſition, he was reſolved to puſh for the experement, before he ſhould be too much hampered for an honourable retreat. He was convinced that miſs, who was under ſuch obligations to him, and might be ſuch a ſufferer by the retraction of his favours, was ſhe poſſeſſed of the leaſt ſpark of levity in her conſtitution, muſt accord to his impure requeſts, which he purpoſed to make to her, as the criterion for judging her very ſoul by: he, dreſſed as engaging as poſſible, paid her a viſit, and exhibited ſome familiarities he had not been accuſtomed to, but the joy ſhe had ever conceived at his chearfulneſs, prevented her from taking notice of his actions; 'till at length, he gave her to underſtand, the price he expected for his paſt favours; at the ſame time, promiſing a perpetual continuance of them, even with augmentation; Harriot ſtarted at the propoſal. You have I muſt own ſurpriſed me in this demand, Fidelio, replied ſhe, ſince it now appears, that the virtuous, the charitable Fidelio, hath ſupported me hitherto for his own purpoſes only. But know, Fidelio, I deſpiſe your ſuit, and decline your further favours, now I know their purchaſe, wrapt in my virtue and integrity, I'll wait the liberal hand of that providence, whoſe favours may be compenſated for, I can but ſtarve, and

and ſtarve I will, in innocence. A flood of tears prevented her ſpeach; and overpowered with riſing diſdain, ſhe fell back into a chair, in a perfect agony.

Fidelio now heartily repented his raſhneſs, he aſſured her he had only jeſted with her, and had only a mind to prove her love for him; but ſhe calling him baſe deceiver, beg'd him to depart from her, 'till ſhe herſelf was capable of a removal, Fidelio quite diſtracted for her affliction, claſping his hands round her, was beginning to intreat her to hear him patiently; when ſhe ſcreaming out, and urging him to leave her, her cries brought the family about them; nor would any thing pacify her, but their conducting Fidelio out of her ſight. Mrs. Harvey was greatly ſurprized, at what could have occaſion'd ſuch a breach betwen Fidelio and her lady, ſhe however prevailed with him to leave the room.

Harriot, after ſome time ſpent in the moſt violent agitation of ſpirits, and weeping even till ſhe could weep no more; wretched woman that I am! ſaid ſhe; was not my meaſure of woe heaped up before, that it ſhould ſtill contain a ſpace for this! This of itſelf, a treble portion, for one heart to ſuſtain! O! that it would end me! O that I was no more! Compoſed in death, how quiet then would theſe afflictions leave me! but while I bear this mortal body, I deſpair of ought, but conſtant diſtreſs and miſery.

Harvey ſaid ſhe, you have I ever found faithfull to me, and while it is in my power to beſtow

ſomething upon you, which will not be long. Go to my drawers, take out my yellow damaſk ſuit, and my white ſattin gown, with ſuch of my linnen as you chuſe, and apply them to your own uſe. Give Betty, poor girl, my ſtriped luſtring, and my tabby gown's, with a portion of my linnen; then burſting out with crying, Fidelio will pay you all your wages, ſaid ſhe. Mrs. Harvey thinking her diſorder had reached her brain, intreated her to lie down; when poſſibly, a little ſleep might prove beneficial to her. No, Harvey, replied ſhe, can a martyr ſleep in flames? Leave me to my ſelf, and apply to what I have juſt ordered you; if yet my orders can have any weight with you. Harvey then left her, and when ſhe had parcelled out the things, ſhe again deſcended, to have informed her lady of it; but not finding her in the parlour, ſhe had hopes of her being in the back-room with Fidelio, and that all difficulties were adjuſting between them.

She therefore ſat herſelf down to wait her lady's pleaſure; Fidelio impatient to beg Miſs Harriot's pardon, called Mrs. Harvey and deſired leave to wait upon her lady: ſhe replied that expecting her lady to have been with him, ſhe had been waiting ſome time in the parlour for her return. He then deſir'd her to ſearch for her all over the houſe: which they did without effect; Sam then recollected he had heard the ſtreet door ſhut, but knew not by whom; they therfore concluded it muſt be Miſs Harriot, that had gone out, but when Fidelio had enquired what had paſſed between

tween Harvey and her lady, in his abſence, and ſhe had related her ſpeeches, and the orders about her cloaths; Fidelio's diſtraction grew ſo maſterleſs, that catching his ſword from the ſheath, he had plunged it into his body, if Sam had not ſeized it; and while Mrs. Harvey clung round his waiſt, diſarmed him; for ſurely, no tokens of frenzy or diſpair, were ever more demonſtrable than in Fidelio. Not being capable of giving regular orders himſelf, Mrs. Harvey diſpatched away inſtantly, as many meſſengers, as ſhe could procure; but every attempt proved fruitleſs: nor could they gain the leaſt intelligence of her.

Fidelio's raving continuing, Mrs. Harvey ſent for a phyſician, who was apprehenſive of a fever in the brain: he was therefore put to bed; but his raving continued till next morning, when falling into a doze, he awaked perfectly ſenſible, but could not conceive where he was; 'till Mrs. Harvey by gentle touches revealed it to him, he then ordered all out of the room, but Mrs. Harvey, and taking her by the hand, he made her ſit down, whilſt he unburthened his mind to her.

Harvey, condoled ſincerely with him, and adviſing him to moderate his perplexity, ſhe promiſed to employ her beſt endeavours in his ſervice, for finding her again, if poſſible. In ſhort they made all manner of enquiry, but to no purpoſe, in near four months inceſſant application.

While theſe things were under tranſaction in Norfolk-ſtreet, Miſs Harriot, no ways, idle in the

proſecution of her view of never ſeeing Fidelio more; had before night wandred as far as Hounſlow, by which time ſhe was ſo tired, that ſhe knew not how to move a ſtep further. At length as ſhe was paſſing by a row of houſes, where ſome women was ſitting on a bench at one of the doors, one of them aſked her if ſhe would pleaſe to ſit down; for that ſhe ſeemed, to be much fatigued with her walking. Miſs Harriot thanked her, and meer neceſſity prevailing, ſhe took her ſeat by them on the bench.

The woman then enquired of miſs how far ſhe had to go that night? miſs fetching a deep ſigh, replied, that ſhe was neither confined to time, or diſtance; but that ſhe was already ſo weary, that ſhe could not go much further; adding, that ſhe ſhould be very much obliged to her, if ſhe could recommend her to a private lodging, the good woman thought ſhe ſaw ſomething ſo open and honeſt in the face of Harriot, and ſhe being dreſſed in every thing of the beſt for a morning dreſs, ſhe told her, that as ſhe ſeemed not to be a perſon, of whom ſhe might have been ſuſpicious, if ſhe pleaſed, ſhe would make up a bed for her, miſs returning her abundance of thanks, accepted her offer. Mrs. Brown (that being the good woman's name) intereſting herſelf very much in ſo young a lady; told her next morning that her huſband and ſhe were afraid that ſhe was flying from her parents; who ſhe ſaid, might be inconſolable for her; and if it would be of any ſervice her huſband ſhould go to town, and endeavour to procure a reconciliation with them, Harriot, burſting

burſting out with crying, replied, it was her misfortune to have loſt her parents; ſhe then gave her a circumſtantial account of what had befallen her, adding, that ſhe wiſhed to get into a good ſervice. Mrs. Brown greatly pitied her, and prevailed with her to ſtay a few days at her houſe, miſs accepted her offer, and for a week lived as pleaſurably as the change of her condition would admit, but ſeeing no proſpect of an alteration in her affairs, ſhe grew uneaſy, but while ſhe was muſing what courſe to take a coach and four ſtopt at the door, and an elderly lady and two young ones came out; but they had not been long in the houſe, before Mrs. Brown came running up ſtairs, O! my dear lady, ſaid ſhe, here is ſuch an opportunity offers, if you are determined upon going to ſervice, as you may never meet with again. She then told her that her old miſtreſs had loſt her chamber maid, that ſhe lived neer Marlborough, and that if ſhe undertook to ſerve her, ſhe muſt go with her immediately. miſs made no heſitation, but deſcended with Mrs. Brown, the old lady was exceedingly pleaſed with her, behavour, in ſhort, miſs followed the lady, her daughter, and niece into the coach, took leave of Mrs. Brown, and drove off.

Mrs. Bartlet, (for ſo was Harriot's miſtreſs called) had related Harriot's ſtory to one Mrs. Morris, a neighbour of hers, as to one whom ſhe placed a confidence in; Mrs. Morris, her occaſions calling her to London had diſcovered where Mrs. Harvey lived, who had been an old acquaintance

quaintance from a girl) and went to visit her before she left town. Mrs. Harvey was glad to see her, and engaged her to stay a day or two, and enquired if old Mrs. Bartlet was living? which Mrs. Morris answered in the affirmative; and fell to telling her of the new servant she had by chance met with on the road, from London, and described the very person of Miss Harriot to her. Harvey had received such transport from this relation, that no sooner could she huddle on her things in the morning, than she flew to Fidelio's chambers; and to his bed-side she ran, with O! Sir, I have found my lady. Found her? said he, my dear Harvey,—where? —where is she? — O! let me cast myself at her feet, till I have gained forgiveness; where? O where is she? dearest Harvey; at home? did she mention me? have you told her my affliction?—O! what says she? Dear sir, said Harvey, I say not, that she is at home; but that I have gained intelligence where she is. She is in the country, sir, in service; poor lady. I vow it grieves my heart; she a servant? poor dear lady. Harvey, said he thou makest me mad, why didst not ride post after her the moment you heard it? Good sir, answered she, would you have had me gone without your orders? What is to be done then? said he, if I may advise. sir said she, it would be for you to write as you think proper, and let me carry it, I then can back the professions you may make to her. Right! said Fidelio, get a coach and four to the door! and you shall depart instantly.

Mrs.

Mrs. Morris had been waiting ſome time for her breakfaſt, when Mrs. Harvey came in, out of breath, and deſired Sam to order a coach and four to be at the door immediately. What in the world can be the matter, ſaid Mrs. Morris, where are you going? Into your country, replied Mrs. Harvy, and ſhall be glad of your company if you can be ready when the coach comes; but I cannot wait if a minute ſhould ſave your life. Well, ſaid Mrs. Morris, if you are going thither, I'll be of your party: but may I not be let into the deſign of your ſo ſudden expedition? Harvey, replied, they ſhould have time enough on the journey; by this time Fidelio came, who informed Mrs. Harvey he intended to go with her and the coach arriving ſoon after, they ſet off immediatly.

It had been concluded on their journey, that Mrs. Harvey and Mrs. Morris ſhould go both together to Mrs. Bartlet's; and that Fidelio ſhoould ſtay at an inn, they therefore paid their viſit betimes next morning, and had the good fortune to be admitted to Mrs. Bartlet, before Harriot had a ſight of Mrs. Harvey. After ſome compliments were paſſed, they acquainted Mrs. Bartlet with the occaſion of their viſit? I aſſure you ſhe is a moſt deſerving young woman, ſaid Mrs. Bartlet, I ſhould be ſorry to part with her, but for her own good. Mrs. Harvey then beg'd leave to diliver a letter to her. Mrs. Bartlet rung the bell and in came Harriot: ſhe bluſhed prodigiouſly at ſight of Harvey, who paid every ſubmiſſive compliment to her and dilivered her Fidelio's letter,

ter, poor Harriot's tears flowed like torrents as ſhe read the epiſtle, and having finiſhed it, Mrs. Bartlet aſked whether ſhe choſe to ſee Fidelio? for that he was but at a houſe hard by? O madam! replied Harriot: if his heart is but as pure as once I eſteemed it, the face of heaven could not afford me ſo agreeable a proſpect. I find you love him ſtill then, ſaid Mrs. Bartlet. Still, as ever I did, ſaid ſhe, it was his offer I deteſted, not the man himſelf, madam. Mrs. Morris begged to carry the welcome news to Fidelio, who joyfully attended her to Mrs. Bartlet's, the graceſulneſs of his mien, and the ſerenity which ſmiled on his undiſguiſed countenance, ſo prejudiced Mrs. Bartlet, in his favour, that ſhe told him as he ſeemed ſo deſirous of making Harriot his wife that, that day ſhould make them one; and while Harriot, and Fidelio, were injoying themſelves on this joyful meeting. Mrs Bartlet ſent for the parſon who proceeding to his office, never day was more joyfully kept, or ceremony more happily conſumated, than between this loving pair.

Fidelio and his lady tarried adout a week, at Mrs. Bartlet's requeſt, in the country; and then returned, with Mrs. Harvey to Norfolk-ſtreet.

FINIS.